

Youth and Play Service Advisory Committee
Thursday 12th February
Room 3, Town Hall

Present

Chair Cllr T Harney.
Councillors T Anderson, S L Clarke, K Hayes, C Meaden.
Council Officers Peter Edmondson (Head of Branch, Participation & Inclusion), Maureen McDaid (Head of Youth & Play Service), Terry Hall (Deputy Head, Field Support), Lindsay Davidson (Deputy Head, Policy Development), Steve Chan (Deputy Head, Play), John Davies (acting Deputy Head), Pat Rice (Head of Response), Bev Madeley (Response), Donna Callaghan (Response).

Apologies

Cllr W Smith, PA Smith, S Quinn.

No members of the EYB were present.

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Minute 43 - Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and took the apologies. It was noted that no members of the EYB were present, but they had all attended several other evening meetings in the recent past.

Minute 44 - Minutes of the last Meeting held on 29th October 2008

The minutes were checked for accuracy, and no corrections were needed:

Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 29th October 2008, be accepted as a true record.

Minute 45 - Matters Arising

Maureen McDaid supplied the figures that had been requested in connection with the Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) Award following her report at the last meeting. The reach in Wirral was 1.8%, representing 583 young people. The North West average was 280 young people.

Resolved:

Members of the Committee contact the Head of Youth Service if they require more information about the take up of DofE.

Minute 46 - Head of Service's Report

Maureen McDaid began by offering the condolences of the Committee to the family of Graham Ashdown who had recently died after 40 years service to young people.

She informed the Committee that she would be moving imminently into a new role in the Department which would be commissioning services for young people. Lindsay Davidson would take over the role of Head of Service temporarily until permanent arrangements were in place.

Maureen McDaid drew the Committee's to several highlights of the report:

- a) the Youth Theatre who recent "Swings & Roundabouts" production had been extremely successful resulting in being asked to perform at National Conference to be held in Halton;
- b) a group of looked after children who had successfully completed a Gold DofE Award Residential in the Czech Republic;
- c) recent activities of the Executive Youth Board (EYB);
- d) refinements to the process to select candidates for the next UK Youth Parliament Elections.

Resolved:

- i) The Committee offer their deepest sympathy to the widow and family of Graham Ashdown;
- ii) The Committee note the Head of Service's Report and wish her every success in new post;
- iii) The Chair of the Committee write to the EYB to thank them for chairing the last Meeting.

Minute 47 - Youth Opportunity Fund/Youth Capital Fund 2006-2009

Lindsay Davidson reported on the activity of the Youth Opportunity Fund/Youth Capital Fund (YOF/YCF) which was approaching the end of its third year. The total sum available has increased from the initial £390,000 to over £600,000 for next year, 2009-2010. There have been over 17,000 beneficiaries.

Now that it was possible to see where the money was going, the Grant Panel are looking to use the money to commission services to give young people greater and easier access to leisure facilities and to support areas such as teenage pregnancy and drug and health issues – issues which were also debated in the Youth Parliament.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

Minute 48 - Youth Voice Conference and Youth Parliament, 16th Oct 2008

Maureen McDaid reported on the Youth Voice Conference and Youth Parliament. The hot-seating at the Youth Voice Conference had been a big improvement on the previous year, by using rooms in the Town Hall other than just the big Civic Hall. However, everyone involved felt that it could be improved further by having fewer but longer sessions.

The Youth Parliament debate in the Council Chamber had been very lively with much cogent argument. However it raised many issues about procedure and order and how the Council should respond to the resolutions made by the Youth Parliament.

Cllr Harney proposed that the Party Spokepersons, the EYB and the Mayor Elect all meet before the next YAPSAC meeting to examine these issues and propose how the Youth Parliament can operate alongside the Council.

Further discussion took place around how the EYB can be more closely integrated into YAPSAC, by chairing meetings, adding items to the Agenda and forwarding resolutions on to Scrutiny Committees. It was recognised that these proposals would impact on the constitution, potentially requiring amendments to be made.

Maureen McDaid went on to report that the two year Beacon Peer Support Project in which Wirral Council was paired with Knowsley and Liverpool, was coming to an end. The researcher attached to the project had commented on the level of involvement between young people and Elected Members, and that shadowing of Senior officers was in place.

Resolved:

- i) That the report be noted;
- ii) That Party Spokepersons, the EYB and the Mayor Elect meet before the next YAPSAC meeting to examine these issues and propose how the Youth Parliament can operate alongside the Council.

Minute 49 - Wirral Summer Holiday Playschemes Report 2008

Steve Chan reported on the 20 Summer Playschemes. Of the 81 staff appointed, almost half had worked the previous year, easing training and other pre-requisites. The Outreach Team had widened the service across the Borough and reached 1,000 children. Lottery funding would enable this service to be extended to all year round.

Cllr. Anderson queried the provision at Woodchurch, which had only operated in the summer although it was an all year round provision. Steve Chan stated that there had been long term sick leave and with no budget allocation for cover, the centre was not able to meet the OFSTED requirements. Lottery funding is being directed to fill this gap.

Resolved:

- i) That the report be noted;
- ii) That Members be kept informed of developments relating to staffing issues, particularly at Woodchurch.

Minute 50 - Response

Pat Rice reported on the activity of Response, particularly in relation to housing support and alcohol misuse. In partnership with Merseyside Police and Arrowe Park Accident & Emergency, Response are now receiving and following up referrals relating to excessive consumption of alcohol.

Take up by young people of Kooth online counselling service was increasing and a counsellor was now based in Response.

A joint project, Bitesize, in partnership with Brook Advisory Service has been nominated for an award.

Members expressed their continued concern about housing issues for young people.

Resolved:

- i) That the report be noted and the staff at Response be thanked;

- ii) That a representative from Forum Housing be invited to the next meeting;
- iii) That housing issues for young people be updated by raising the matter with the Regeneration Department.

Minute 51 - Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was set for 5:30 pm on Thursday 7th May 2009 in Committee Room 1, Town Hall.

As resolved at a previous meeting, this next meeting will be chaired by young people and recorded using the video technology in the Committee Room.